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**Remarks:**

Reconsideration of the application as herein amended and in view of the remarks herein is respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to claims 1, 3 and 5 because of informalities. Applicant has amended claims 1, 3 and 5 to remedy the informalities that the Examiner has indicated.

The Examiner objected to claims 2 and 6 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but stated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended claims 1 and 5 such that these claims now correspond to the previous claims 2 and 6 with the inclusion of the limitations of the previous claims 1 and 5, respectively, which were the base claims. Claims 2 and 6 have now been canceled without prejudice. No new claims have been introduced. All claims other than 1 and 5 were already on file and are dependent claims.

The application is therefore now deemed to be in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is solicited.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7, 8, 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sarat (US 6,199,128 B1) and rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Sarat in view of Sengoku (US 5,875,321).

Although the amendments to the claims filed herewith effectively overcome these rejections, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's reasoning that underlies these rejections.

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The Examiner contends that Sarat's contact pads I/O<sub>1</sub> and I/O<sub>2</sub> (Sarat, Figs. 6 and 7) constitute a differential pair with potentials present on said pads being opposite to each other.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner is in error. Sarat's smart card illustrated in Figs. 6 and 7 constitutes a serial element within a data path between a CPU and a keyboard (Fig. 6) or a data path between a display and a keyboard (Fig. 7). Data that is transmitted via those data paths passes through Sarat's smart card if such a smart card is present. It is to be noted that, in Fig. 6, the switch is closed when sensor 28 detects that there is no smart card. However, when a smart card is present, any data transfer from the keyboard to the CPU, or vice versa, flows through the smart card. Consequently, when one of Sarat's two contact pads (I/O<sub>1</sub>, I/O<sub>2</sub>) receives data, the other contact pad must transmit data. In other words, when one contact pad is an input, the other contact must be an output. This, by definition, makes it impossible for Sarat's two contact pads (I/O<sub>1</sub>, I/O<sub>2</sub>) to constitute a differential pair: a differential pair is either an input or an output but cannot be both at the same time!

Applicant has therefore that intention to file a continuation of the present application with independent claims that correspond to the rejected independent claims 1 and 5.

It is submitted that all the claims now in the application are allowable. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and claims and its early allowance. If the Examiner believes that the prosecution of the application would be facilitated by a telephonic interview, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the number given below.

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It is believed that no additional fees, other than as set forth in the Petition for Extension of Time, are due in connection with this Response as has been indicated on the transmittal letter. If Applicant is in error as to these fees, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, as per the Fee Transmittal (PTO/SB/17) and Credit Card Authorization (PTO-2038).

Respectfully Submitted,



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Registration No. 35,759

Date: March 9, 2004

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